

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MAY 13, 1896.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. GALLINGER, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 2844.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2844) granting a pension to Martha McNeil, have examined the same, and report:

The report of the Committee on Invalid Pensions of the House of Representatives hereto appended is adopted, and the passage of the bill is recommended.

HOUSE REPORT.

John McNeil, who was the husband of the beneficiary of this bill, was mustered into the United States service as colonel of the Third United States Reserve Corps, Missouri Volunteer Infantry, and was mustered out August 17, 1861. He was mustered in as colonel Second Missouri State Militia Volunteer Cavalry, April 26, 1862, and was promoted to brigadier-general May 13, 1863, and from that time on he was actively engaged in suppressing guerrilla bands and encouraging the loyal citizens, and by his untiring efforts succeeded in preserving the State of Missouri to the Union. His resignation, which was tendered April 3, 1865, was accepted to date April 12, 1865. In it he said:

"I beg to state that my reason for resigning is that, having been for nearly four years in constant service, I have suffered to such an extent in my pecuniary affairs that my longer continuance in the service threatens me with financial ruin and my family with beggary."

He was a pensioner from gunshot wound of right hip until his death, which occurred on June 8, 1891.

The widow, who was married to the soldier on September 28, 1834, is now 79 years of age, is disabled on account of age and its attendant infirmities, and, as is shown by the evidence before this committee, has an income of only \$284.60 per annum, which in her aged and disabled condition is totally inadequate to her needs.

Your committee therefore recommend that the bill do pass.

Appended is a memorial of the commandery of the Loyal Legion for the State of Missouri, which fittingly describes the valuable services to his country of the gallant officer, Gen. John McNeil.

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MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HEADQUARTERS COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI,  
St. Louis, November 7, 1891.

At a stated meeting of the commandery, held at the Laclede Hotel, St. Louis, on the above date, the following memorial was unanimously adopted:

IN MEMORIAM.—GENERAL JOHN M'NEIL.

On the 8th day of June, 1891, John McNeil, brevet major-general United States Volunteers and companion of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, entered into

rest. After a long and patriotic career he died in the fullness of years, respected and lamented. In honor of his memory his companions of the Missouri commandery erect this memorial.

No man ever loved his country more ardently than John McNeil. In days that were darkest and amid trials that were sorest he was from first to last the noncompromising defender of her integrity, and so closely linked together were his loyalty and his appreciation of duty that between them neither policy nor expediency ever found a middle ground.

John McNeil was born of American parentage in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the 4th day of February, 1813. After receiving a common-school education he learned the trade of a hatter, in Boston, Mass., at the age of 16, and three years later he was president of the Mechanics' Apprentice Library Association. In 1832 he removed to New York and entered into copartnership with his father, and also became, while a resident of that city, a member of the famous New York Seventh Regiment. He settled in St. Louis in 1836, first taking a position in the employ of a Mr. McKee, and subsequently setting up for himself in the retail, and afterwards, upon Main street, in the wholesale hat business. In 1844-45 he was a member of the Missouri legislature, and from 1855 to 1861 was president of the Pacific Insurance Company. From the time of his settlement in St. Louis to the breaking out of the war he continued, however, to prosecute the business of a wholesale hat merchant.

On the 18th of May, 1861, he abandoned his business and entered the military service of the United States as colonel of the Third United States Reserve Corps, Missouri Volunteers. During April and May he was engaged in organizing the regiment at Turner Hall, and on the 10th of the latter month participated in the capture of Camp Jackson. On July 16 and 17 he was engaged in the capture of Fulton, Mo., and in the defeat of General Harris. After serving as post commander and provost-marshal of St. Louis until August, 1861, he was, on the 10th of the month, mustered out of service.

On the 7th of the following December he reentered the service as colonel of the Second Missouri (cavalry) State Militia. He engaged in actions of Walkerville, Mo., April 2 and 14, 1862, and on June 4 was assigned to the command of the district of northeast Missouri, with headquarters at Palmyra. He was in action against the enemy on June 26, 1862, and from July 28 to August 6 operated in the campaign against Porter's guerrillas in northern Missouri, engaging them at Whalleys Mills, August 1, and in the battle of Kirksville, August 5 and 6, where Porter's command of 3,000 men was dispersed. He was also in actions at Stockton, August 6, Bragg's Farm, September 13, and Shelbourne, September 15. On the 23d of October he was assigned to the command of the eighth military district of Missouri, and engaged in operations in Lewis, Clark, Scotland, and Schuyler counties.

On the 29th of November, 1862, he was commissioned a brigadier-general "for gallant services north of the Missouri River." From December, 1862, to May, 1863, he operated against guerrillas in southeastern Missouri, being in action at Bloomfield, March 1; in the expedition from that place, March 9 to 15; in command at Cape Girardeau in April; in command against Marmaduke and pursuit from Cape Girardeau to Chalk Bluffs, Arkansas, April 17 to May 2; engaging in actions at Cape Girardeau, April 26; Jackson and near White River, April 27; Castor River, April 29; Bloomfield, April 30; and Chalk Bluffs, on St. Francis River, May 1 and 2.

From July 15 to October 19, 1863, he commanded the district of southwestern Missouri, with headquarters at Springfield. He was in the campaign against Shelby, from September 22 to October 26, being in action at Humansville, October 16, and Buffalo Mountain, October 24.

On the 29th of October he was assigned to command the district of the Frontier Department of Missouri. From March to August, 1864, he commanded the district of Lafourche, Department of the Gulf, and subsequently (until September) the district of Rolla, Department of the Missouri.

On the 6th of October he was assigned to the command of the second brigade of the forces at Jefferson City, Mo., and operated against Price in his invasion of the State from September 24 to October 26, participating in the repulse of Price's attack on Jefferson, October 6 and 7; in actions at Brownsville, October 9 and 11; Little Blue, October 21; Independence, October 22; Big Blue, October 23; Coldwater Grove, October 24; Marias des Cygnes and the rout of Price's army, October 25.

From October, 1864, to April, 1865, he commanded the district of central Missouri, and on the 12th of the latter month he resigned and was honorably mustered out of the service, having been on the same day brevetted a major-general of volunteers, "for gallant and distinguished services during the war of the rebellion."

Thus for four long, bitter years, unallured by those grander and more brilliant campaigns which were heaping honors upon other men, did this brave soldier stand at his post of duty, and thus in the arena of a fierce and merciless border warfare did he battle against the forces which vainly struggled to wrest the great State of Missouri from her allegiance.

The importance of this work and the value of these services can only be estimated in the light of the disastrous results which must have followed the successful occupation of this great strategic section of the country by the powers of the rebellion. No more enduring monument can be builded to the honor of our deceased companion than the page of history which will record that he was one of the leaders whose untiring energy saved this imperial State from the calamity and the crime of secession.

At the conclusion of the war General McNeil settled in St. Louis, and was soon appointed clerk of the criminal court. In 1866 he was elected sheriff of St. Louis County (then including the city of St. Louis), which office he held until 1871. He was a Centennial Commissioner from 1872 to 1876; also a United States Indian inspector until 1882. During 1883, and until June, 1885, he was chief inspector of United States customs. In 1887 he was assistant adjutant-general of the Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Missouri, and in 1890 was appointed to a position of trust in the St. Louis post-office. Although in apparent health, he died suddenly while in the discharge of his official duties.

It is a pleasure to record that as a citizen in the private walks of life General McNeil was modest in deportment and always courteous in address. Well read, especially in historical literature, he was an interesting conversationalist, and rarely inaccurate in marshaling argumentative data. Despite adverse circumstances of fortune, he was cheerful, unobtrusive, free from jealousy, and never happier than in the society of his old comrades of the war, to whom he was devotedly attached. Beneath a natural ruggedness of character and a crisp, stern manner of speech, he had a warm and tender heart, which often found expression in illy concealed emotion.

His consideration of the complex questions which grew out of the war was tempered by an earnest desire to eradicate the bitterness which four years of strife had engendered, and to create in the new life of the country a patriotism which should universally pervade the hearts of the American people.

In grateful appreciation of his services for the preservation of the Union, the commandery of the State of Missouri enters this memorial upon its records, with instructions to the recorder to transmit a copy to the family of the deceased.

CHAS. E. PEARCE, Chairman,  
NELSON COLE,  
THOS. WRIGHT,  
Committee.  
Major JAMES G. BUTLER,  
Commander.

W. R. HODGES,  
Captain, United States Volunteers, Recorder.

